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Magnolia macrophylla

Janice Coons
Eastern Illinois University

Nancy Coutant
Eastern Illinois University

Wesley Whiteside
Eastern Illinois University

Wes Whiteside—Species Information Sheet

I. Nomenclature

Family: Magnoliaceae

Genus Species(Authority): *Magnolia macrophylla* Michx.

Subspecies/Variety(Authority):

Cultivar:

Common Name: Bigleaf Magnolia

II. Origin (country and/or habitat)

Native/Rare **Native/Uncommon** Old World/Rare Old World/Uncommon

While never becoming a dominant tree, the bigleaf magnolia has a wide natural range in forests as far south as Georgia, west to Louisiana and Arkansas, north up to Ohio and Kentucky with it being most common in south central Mississippi. It prefers shady and moist areas along gorges (Callaway 1994).

III. Habit

Tree Shrub Vine

Herbaceous Annual Herbaceous Biennial Herbaceous Perennial

Flowering Season: May-June

Flower Color: White; commonly with purple blotches observable at the interior base of the petals; however some trees have pure white petals

Fruit Type: Follicetum

IV. Source of Plant Material

From where or whom obtained and when: First plantings of *Magnolia macrophylla* started in the late 1960's. Some seed was collected from Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania while other seed was obtained through the Magnolia Society. One seedling was collected in the wild north of Gatlinburg, Tennessee in "Boogertown," TN and represents the only "pure white" form of flower that is grown at the Whiteside Garden. A "Whopper" clone graft was provided by Joe McDaniel of the University of Illinois Horticulture Department having large 18 inch flowers with extra petals and larger purple blotches at the base of the petals. This graft is in serious decline but has provided a thriving seedling that retained the "Whopper" characteristics.

Propagule Material:

Seed Vegetative **Whole Plant**

Details:

Availability: It has limited availability through mail-order services.

V. Cultural

Special Soil Type: Sources have suggested that rich moist soil is preferred (Callaway 1994). However, experiences at Wesley's property have been most successful in well drained soil. Wet, soggy locations have proved to be fatal.

Soil Moisture: Wet **Mesic** Dry Other

VI. Additional Comments

It is suggested that the leaves of the tree be protected from wind and direct sunlight (Callaway 1994). At the Whiteside Garden, proper drainage has been a more important issue. Plants that have done the best have been those that have seeded on their own on slopes at the base of pines, likely due to hummus and acidity influence of fallen pine needles. Extensive soil augmentation, particularly peat moss, has resulted in short lived trees. However long lived trees have resulted from less soil preparation and heavy mulching after planting.

VII. Literature Cited

Callaway, D. J., 1994. The World of Magnolias. Oregon. Timber Press Inc.